Claims

[c1] 1. A method for use with first and second metadata streams with respect to a video stream, the first metadata stream time-coded with respect to the video stream and the second metadata stream not time-coded with respect to the video stream, the method comprising the steps of:
aligning the second metadata stream with the first metadata stream;
adding time codes to the second metadata stream, based on the alignment;
searching for proper names within the second metadata stream;
finding faces within the video stream;
matching faces with proper names; and
placing the matched faces and proper names into a reference library.

[c2] 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the video stream is news footage, wherein the first metadata stream is closed captioning for the hearing impaired, and wherein the second metadata stream is a separate description of the news footage.

[c3] 3. A method for use with a system storing myriad digital media files, the method comprising the steps of:
generating myriad first thumbnail images, each first thumbnail image corresponding to one of the digital media files, each first thumbnail image having lower resolution and smaller dimensions then the corresponding digital media file, each first thumbnail image having first dimensions;
displaying a subset of the first thumbnail images, the subset comprising more than one and less than all of the myriad first thumbnail images, the subset created as a result of input from a first user;
receiving a configuration command from a second user, the configuration command indicative of second dimensions differing from the first dimensions;
generating myriad second thumbnail images, each second thumbnail image corresponding to one of the digital media files, each second thumbnail image having lower resolution and smaller dimensions then the corresponding digital media file, each second thumbnail image having second dimensions;
displaying a subset of the second thumbnail images, the subset comprising more than one and less than all of the myriad second thumbnail images, the subset created as a result of input from a third user.

[c4] 4. A method for use with a system storing myriad digital media files, the method comprising the steps of:
generating myriad first thumbnail images, each first thumbnail image corresponding to one of the digital media files, each first thumbnail image having lower resolution and smaller dimensions then the corresponding digital media file, each first thumbnail image having first dimensions;
displaying a subset of the first thumbnail images, the subset comprising more than one and less than all of the myriad first thumbnail images, the subset created as a result of input from a first user;
a configuration command from a second user, the configuration command indicative of second resolution differing from the first resolution;
generating myriad second thumbnail images, each second thumbnail image corresponding to one of the digital media files, each second thumbnail image having lower resolution and smaller dimensions then the corresponding digital media file, each second thumbnail image having second resolution;
displaying a subset of the second thumbnail images, the subset comprising more than one and less than all of the myriad second thumbnail images, the subset created as a result of input from a third user.

[c5] 5. A method for use with a system storing digital media records, the system comprising a vocabulary file of words keyed to the digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:
receiving a search query by computer from a user, the search query including words;
logging the search query by computer, yielding a query log;
processing the query log to identify words in the query log which are not words already included in the vocabulary file and which are not words which are variants of words already included in the vocabulary file, the processing performed by computer, said words defined as "not-found words;"
adding the not-found words to the vocabulary file, and
the not-found words to the digital media records.

[c6] 6. A method for use with a system storing digital media records, the system comprising a data file defining rights management questions and multiple-

choice answers thereto, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving, from a first user, a selection of rights management questions and respective multiple-choice answers for the data file;

receiving, from a second user non-identical to the first user, a query regarding a first digital media record;

presenting, to the second user, a first rights management question among the selection of rights management questions;

receiving, from the second user, a multiple-choice answer from among the respective multiple-choice answers with respect to the first rights management question, and storing same;

presenting, to the second user, a second rights management question among the selection of rights management questions;

receiving, from the second user, a multiple-choice answer from among the respective multiple-choice answers with respect to the second rights management question, and storing same;

presenting, to the second user, a third rights management question among the selection of rights management questions;

receiving, from the second user, a multiple-choice answer from among the respective multiple-choice answers with respect to the third rights management question, and storing same;

deriving pricing information for the second user with respect to the first digital media record from the stored multiple-choice answers;

receiving, from a third user non-identical to the first user and non-identical to the second user, a query regarding a second digital media record;

presenting, to the third user, a fourth rights management question among the selection of rights management questions;

receiving, from the third user, a multiple-choice answer from among the respective multiple-choice answers with respect to the fourth rights management question, and storing same;

presenting, to the third user, a fifth rights management question among the selection of rights management questions;

from the third user, a multiple-choice answer from among the respective multiple-choice answers with respect to the fifth rights management question,

and storing same;

presenting, to the third user, a sixth rights management question among the selection of rights management questions;

receiving, from the third user, a multiple-choice answer from among the respective multiple-choice answers with respect to the sixth rights management question, and storing same;

deriving pricing information for the third user with respect to the second digital media record from the stored multiple-choice answers.

[c7] 7. A method for use with a system storing digital media records, the system comprising a search engine the operation of which is defined by a plurality of stored parameters, the stored parameters defining, for the search engine, an extent to which the search engine expands search terms, the system communicatively coupled to an internet and providing a hypertext transfer protocol server interface to the internet, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving from a first user, via a hypertext transfer protocol client session, a change to one of the parameters;

storing the change to the one of the stored parameters;

from a second user, via a hypertext transfer protocol client session, a search request;

passing the search request to the search engine;

performing, by the search engine, a search determined by the search request and determined by the stored parameters, and deriving search results therefrom;

reporting the search results to the second user.

[c8] 8. A method for use with a system storing digital media records, the system comprising a search engine searching said digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:

displaying all or part of a first digital media record to a user;

receiving, from the user, first information indicative of a selection of less than all of the displayed portion of the first digital media record;

receiving, from the user, second information indicative of text;

performing, by the search engine, a search of the digital media records with

respect to the first information and the second information, and deriving search results therefrom; and

displaying the search results to the user.

[c9] 9. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving search requests from users;

logging the search requests;

expanding the search requests;

applying a statistical clustering algorithm, thereby grouping similar search requests together;

identifying, using a semantic net hierarchy, a lowest-level term in the hierarchy that subsumes all of the queries in a grouping of search requests;

communicating the identified term to a user.

[c10] 10. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving search requests from users;

by the search engine, searches based upon the search requests, yielding respective search results, each search result defining selected digital media records, the digital media records each having associated metadata;

logging the search results and the metadata associated with digital media records selected therein;

expanding the metadata, defining expanded query metadata results;

applying a statistical clustering algorithm, thereby grouping similar expanded query metadata results together;

identifying, using a semantic net hierarchy, a lowest-level term in the hierarchy that subsumes all of the expanded query metadata results in the grouping of expanded query metadata results;

communicating the identified term to a user.

[c11] 11. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and

comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:
receiving first search requests from a plurality of first users;
performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the first search requests, yielding respective first search results, each first search result defining first selected digital media records;the first search results;
receiving, from the first users, information indicative of subsequent actions by the first users selecting particular ones of the selected digital media records;
receiving a second search request from a second user;
performing, by the search engine, a search based upon the second search request, yielding respective second search results, the second search results defining second selected digital media records;
ranking the second selected digital media records downward for at least one second selected digital media record that was selected by at least one first user.

[c12] 12. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:
receiving first search requests from a plurality of first users;
performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the first search requests, yielding respective first search results, each first search result defining first selected digital media records;
logging the first search results;
receiving, from the first users, information indicative of subsequent actions by the first users selecting particular ones of the selected digital media records;
receiving a second search request from a second user;
performing, by the search engine, a search based upon the second search request, yielding respective second search results, the second search results defining second selected digital media records;
ranking the second selected digital media records downward for at least one second selected digital media record that was selected by at least a predetermined number of first users.

[c13] 13. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and

comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving first search requests from a plurality of first users;

performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the first search requests, yielding respective first search results, each first search result defining first selected digital media records;

logging the first search results;

receiving, from the first users, information indicative of subsequent actions by the first users selecting particular ones of the selected digital media records;

receiving a second search request from a second user;

performing, by the search engine, a search based upon the second search request, yielding respective second search results, the second search results defining second selected digital media records;

ranking the second selected digital media records downward for at least one second selected digital media record that was selected at least a predetermined number of times by first users.

[c14] 14. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:first search requests from a plurality of first users;

performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the first search requests, yielding respective first search results, each first search result defining first selected digital media records;

displaying said first selected digital media records presented in an order, said order defining a first-presented first selected digital media record;

logging the event of a first user purchasing said first-presented first selected digital media record;

reporting, to a second user, the frequency of occurrence of the logged events.

[c15] 15. A method for use with a system storing digital media records for purchase and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving first search requests from a plurality of first users;

performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the first search requests, yielding respective first search results, each first search result defining first selected digital media records;
displaying said first selected digital media records presented in an order, said order defining a first-presented first selected digital media record;
logging the event of a first user issuing several consecutive search requests, and receiving respective first selected digital media requests greater in number than a predetermined threshold for said several consecutive search requests;
to a second user, the frequency of occurrence of the logged events.

[c16] 16. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:
receiving search requests from users;
performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the search requests, yielding respective search results, each search result defining selected digital media records or being empty;
logging the search requests for which the search result is empty;
expanding the logged search requests;
applying a statistical clustering algorithm to the logged search requests, thereby grouping similar search requests together;
communicating a group of search requests to a user.

[c17] 17. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the system permitting user expressions of interest in particular stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:
search requests from users;
performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the search requests, yielding respective search results, each search result defining selected digital media records;
logging the search requests for which a user has expressed interest in a selected digital media record;
expanding the logged search requests;

applying a statistical clustering algorithm to the logged search requests, thereby grouping similar search requests together;

communicating a group of search requests to a user.

[c18] 18. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving first search requests from a plurality of first users;

performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the first search requests, yielding respective first search results, each first search result defining first selected digital media records;

logging the first search results;

receiving, from the first users, information indicative of subsequent actions by the first users expressing interest in particular ones of the selected digital media records;

receiving a second search request from a second user;

performing, by the search engine, a search based upon the second search request, yielding respective second search results, the second search results defining second selected digital media records;

ranking the second selected digital media records upward for at least one second selected digital media record that was for which at least one first user expressed interest.

[c19] 19. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving first search requests from a plurality of first users;

performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the first search requests, yielding respective first search results, each first search result defining first selected digital media records;

logging the first search results;

receiving, from the first users, information indicative of subsequent actions by the first users expressing interest in particular ones of the selected digital media records;

receiving a second search request from a second user;
performing, by the search engine, a search based upon the second search request, yielding respective second search results, the second search results defining second selected digital media records;
ranking the second selected digital media records upward for at least one second selected digital media record that was for which at least a predetermined number of first users expressed interest.

[c20] 20. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:
receiving first search requests from a plurality of first users;
performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the first search requests, yielding respective first search results, each first search result defining first selected digital media records;
logging the first search results;
receiving, from the first users, information indicative of subsequent actions by the first users expressing interest in particular ones of the selected digital media records;
receiving a second search request from a second user;
performing, by the search engine, a search based upon the second search request, yielding respective second search results, the second search results defining second selected digital media records;
ranking the second selected digital media records upward for at least one second selected digital media record for which first users expressed interest at least a predetermined number of times.

[c21] 21. A method for use with a system storing digital media records and comprising a search engine searching said stored digital media records, the method comprising the steps of:
receiving first search requests from a plurality of first users;
performing, by the search engine, searches based upon the first search requests, yielding respective first search results, each first search result defining first selected digital media records;

logging the first search results;

receiving, from the first users, information indicative of subsequent actions by the first users expressing interest in particular ones of the selected digital media records;

receiving a second search request from a second user;

performing, by the search engine, a search based upon the second search request, yielding respective second search results, the second search results defining second selected digital media records;

the second selected digital media records upward for at least one second selected digital media record for which expression of interest satisfies a predetermined threshold, wherein expression of interest comprises a weighted function of two or more of the following events: the user placing the selected digital media record into an online shopping cart, the user purchasing rights to use the selected digital media record, and the user placing the selected digital media record into an online projects folder or other work space.

[c22] 22. A method for use with a metadata stream with respect to a video stream, the metadata stream time-coded with respect to the video stream, the method comprising the steps, performed by a computer, of:

searching for proper names within the metadata stream;

finding faces within the video stream;

matching faces with proper names; and

placing the matched faces and proper names into a reference library.

[c23] 23. The method of claim 22 wherein the video stream is news footage, wherein the metadata stream is closed captioning for the hearing impaired.

[c24] 24. A method for use with a metadata stream with respect to at least one video stream, the metadata stream time-coded with respect to the at least one video stream, the method comprising the steps, performed by a computer, of:

searching for proper names within the metadata stream;

finding faces within the at least one video stream;

matching faces with proper names;the matched faces and proper names into a reference library; and

for a selected proper name, generating a list of locations within the at least one video stream associated with that selected proper name.

[c25] 25. The method of claim 24 wherein the video stream is news footage, wherein the metadata stream is closed captioning for the hearing impaired.

[c26] 26. The method of claim 24 further comprising the step of communicating the list of locations to a rights management system.

[c27] 27. A method for use with a system for managing digital media files, the method comprising the steps of:
using face recognition to recognize faces portrayed in the digital media files, yielding metadata with respect to the digital media files indicative of the recognized faces;
analyzing the metadata indicative of the recognized faces to detect duplicate files among the digital media files; and
displaying the duplicate files for a user.

[c28] 28. A method for use with a system for managing digital media files, the method comprising the steps of:
using image recognition to recognize images portrayed in the digital media files, yielding metadata with respect to the digital media files indicative of the recognized images;
analyzing the metadata indicative of the recognized images to detect duplicate files among the digital media files; and
the duplicate files for a user.

[c29] 29. A method for use with a system for managing digital media files, the method comprising the steps of:
using scene detection to detect scenes portrayed in the digital media files, yielding metadata with respect to the digital media files indicative of the detected scenes;
analyzing the metadata indicative of the detecting scenes to detect duplicate files among the digital media files; and
displaying the duplicate files for a user.